



National Disability Institute
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May 13, 2015

Michigan ABLE Act (HB 4541, 4542, 4543, 4544)
Chair: Representative Anthony Forlini
Majority Vice-Chair: Representative Peter Pettalia
Minority Vice-Chair: Representative Henry Yanez
House Committee on Financial Services

**National Disability Institute Written Testimony before the
House Committee on Financial Services
May 13, 2015 – 10:30 am**

I am writing on behalf of the National Disability Institute (NDI). NDI is a Washington, DC based national disability related nonprofit solely focused on the economic mobility and financial wellbeing of Americans with disabilities. Since the passage of the ABLE Act, NDI has been extensively involved in assisting states in developing and passing their respective state ABLE legislation. We are also involved in advising the United States Department of Treasury as they work to publish the guidance surrounding this ever important program for people with disabilities. We are excited to see that Michigan has filed legislation to implement the ABLE program and do support this effort.

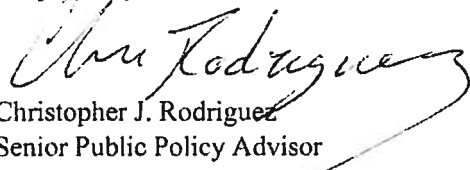
The Michigan ABLE legislation will allow qualified individuals with disabilities the ability to save funds, for the use of disability related expenses, while protecting their eligibility for essential state and federally funded means tested supports and services. This would allow individuals with disability an increased opportunity to pursue integrated competitive employment, advance their independence, and ultimately improve their overall quality of life.

While we support the vast majority of the language in the bill package, we are somewhat concerned over Section 7(7) of HB 4542. We believe that codifying the requirement that a beneficiary must request each disbursement individually through a request form sets in law a significant burden both to the administrator and to the beneficiary. We believe that the state Treasurer's office should have the ability to implement the program how it sees fit (provided it is within the parameters of the federal statute), and should have the flexibility to make programmatic changes related to disbursements without legislative amendments, therefore we would recommend that the language in Section 7(7) be taken out.

Thank you for your consideration and again we applaud your efforts to assist those with disabilities in the State of Michigan.

Please feel free to contact me at crodriguez@ndi-inc.org if you have any question.

Respectfully,


Christopher J. Rodriguez
Senior Public Policy Advisor
National Disability Institute